

**PATTERN OF THE NEWS MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NEWS DISCUSSION
AMONG YOUTH: A TEST OF AGENDA SETTING THEORY**

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PATTERN OF THE NEWS MEDIA CONSUMPTION AND NEWS DISCUSSION AMONG YOUTH: A TEST OF AGENDA SETTING THEORY

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Abstract

There have been many studies in the media consumption habits among youth. Previous studies reported that youth preferred news on online media compared to other news media. This study tries to explore the pattern of news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. The specific objectives of the study are (1) to determine the level of perceived news media credibility, (2) to find out the level of news media consumption, (3) to find out the extent of interpersonal news discussions, (4) to analyze the relationship between perceived media credibility and news media consumption with interpersonal news discussions, and (5) to differentiate between selected demographic characteristic with news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. The study made use of survey research design method. The data were collected using a set of self-administered questionnaire. A sample of 1363 was randomly selected using stratified random sample. Malaysian youth aged 15-25 years old were gathered for the study. The data were analyzed using SPSS WIN 16.0. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used for the study.

Keyword: news media consumption, news discussion, media credibility, agenda setting theory, youth.

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INTRODUCTION

Most research pertaining to agenda setting tests the reception of the audience on salient news presented by the media. Both content analysis and complementary survey on the news content most received were analyzed. Very few researches touch on the outcome of the news, that is, discussions between audience with their family members and with their friends; youth is no exception to this issue. As such, it is pertinent that a study beyond the coverage and the reception is explored. Therefore, this study tries to explore the pattern of news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions.

The specific objectives of the study are (1) to determine the level of perceived news media credibility, (2) to find out the level of news media consumption, (3) to find out the extent of interpersonal news discussions, (4) to analyze the relationship between perceived media credibility and news media consumption with interpersonal news discussions, and (5) to differentiate between selected demographic characteristic with news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Agenda Setting Theory

The principal outlines of Agenda Setting Theory were sketched by Walter Lippmann (1922), who argued that the public responds not to actual events in the environment but to the images of events created by media or to “the pictures in our heads.” The agenda setting scholars look at how the media could shape not the attitude about the issues, but the perceptions about what issues are important. Cohen (1963) stated that the mass media may not be successful much of telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.

According to McCombs and Shaw (1972), mass media have an agenda setting function. Agenda setting describes the process by which the mass media select and concentrate on certain issues, leading people to perceive those issues as more salient or

important than others. The media are giving greater proportion of the news and placing the news more prominently in the newspapers or the newscast.

The core concept in Agenda Setting Theory is the transfer of issue salience, that is, how the media emphasis on political issues raises their salience in public opinion. With increasing exposure to news media, different demographic groups, including young adults and adults, show greater agreement about the salience of issues on public agenda (Shaw & Martin, 1992). Studies generally found that the level of media exposure correlates with agenda-setting effects (Lasorsa & Wanta, 1990; Wanta & Hu, 1994).

Moreover, Rogers (2002) suggested that “intermedia processes” of media effect, in which media messages stimulate interpersonal communication. He pointed out that the mass media often have effects through interpersonal communication with others and that the media effects could be found more important when media messages encourage interpersonal communication about certain issues. In other words, mass media coverage of a certain important issue can stimulate interpersonal communication among people, which may in turn, influence behavioral change.

While agenda setting may be a societal effect, the process of agenda setting takes place within individuals. Utilizing this agenda-setting effect, Wanta (1997) employed a path analysis model of agenda-setting effects. According to his results, individuals first form opinions regarding the perceived credibility of the mass media. Based on these perceptions, individuals form a level of reliance on the mass media for information. Individuals, then, expose themselves to media content based on this level of reliance. Finally, exposure to the media leads to agenda-setting effects. Thus, the results showed that the agenda-setting effects were strongest for active processors of media messages. Miller and Wanta (1996) also used this agenda-setting susceptibility measure to examine agenda-setting differences between different racial groups.

Perceived Media Credibility

Media credibility is the degree of believability of the source of information as perceived by audience (Syed Arabi & Saodah, 2004). According to Bucy (2003), the audience's perceptions of news channel believability is distinct from the believability of the journalists, media organizations, or a content of the news itself. A number of factors contribute to making a source or channel credibility, namely, objectivity, accessibility, freedom to report, currency of the report, and relative expertise. Gunther (1992) argued that a person's involvement in an issue is a good predictor of perceived credibility. People depend on the media to get information to make decisions and judgments. Information from the media is also used to augment information obtained from interpersonal sources.

Many researchers discovered that a lot of factors affected media credibility, with media use and media reliance being frequently examined. Existing literature contends that increases in media use are usually accompanied by enhanced credibility perception, regardless of media type (Westley & Severin, 1964; Greenberg, 1966; Shaw, 1973; Lo & Chen, 1993). That is to say that media use (or media exposure) is always related to media credibility.

Previous research on media credibility focused on comparing news credibility among media channels, for example, comparing television to newspapers (Kioussis, 2001; Newhagen & Nass, 1989; McCroskey & Jenson, 1981). The results of the studies have been mixed, with some studies suggesting that television is the most credible medium, followed by newspapers, and radio (Gaziano & McGrath, 1986; Roper, 1985; Westley and Severin, 1964) while others giving evidence that newspapers has surpassed television in credibility rating (Kioussis, 2001; Flanagan & Metzger, 2000). A few studies have been conducted in comparing credibility of the new media and the traditional media. The study shows that the Internet credibility is taking its pace alongside TV (Kioussis, 2001) or newspapers (Johnson, & Kaye, 1998). Additionally, study by the Pew Research Center and Online News Association in 2002 found that a new medium is more credible than traditional media.

Wanta (1997) found that individuals' perceptions of the credibility of the media and their level of reliance on news media content for information play important roles in the agenda-setting process. If individuals believe in the news media and are highly reliant on the news media for political information, they tend to demonstrate strong agenda-setting effects (Wanta & Ghanem, 2001).

News Media Consumption

The primary mission of the news media is to provide public with information that helps them make informed decisions about important public or civic affairs (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2001).

Several studies show that younger people read newspapers and watch TV news less than the older generations (Lauf, 2001; Stevenson, 1994; McCarty & Shrum, 1993). Older people are more likely to use newspapers, TV news, and magazines for information than are younger people (Lauf, 2001; Stevenson, 1994; McCarty & Shrum, 1993).

Many studies have also suggested the effects of a particular form and content of the mass media. According to De Fleur and Cronin (1991), individuals recalled more details from news stories that were presented in the newspapers than on TV. The rapid pace and non-repetitive format of TV news has made viewers generally failed to recall specific details (Stauffer, et al., 1983). However, Grabber (2001) indicates that the audiovisual aspect of television news is by far the most user-friendly manner to learn about politics for ordinary citizen. Empirical evidence has shown that even the more passive viewers with less skills and resources proved to have significantly increased their levels of political knowledge (Graber, 1999).

However, in this modern time, Internet has become an influential political news media than the newspapers. A study by World Association of Newspaper (WAN) in 2007 revealed that young people considered Internet as their first choice for news and information. Young people become more dependent in Internet for all purposes,

including news gathering (Lee, 2006; Vissers & Quintelier, 2009). This may partly be due to the fact that youth seek online news sources more readily and intensively than older people (Jung, Qiu & Kim, 2001; Vissers & Quintelier, 2009).

Malaysian youth used Internet as a significant communication tool for gathering political information. For example, in the 12th Malaysian National Election, blog was the greatest political news medium that had been used by young voters in gathering information on political news (Abdullah, 2008). Similarly, the use of online news media is also common in political arena in Singapore in distributing political news and information to communities (Soon and Kluver, 2007). Thus, the type of media used in gathering political information and/or other information has switched to Internet because of its availability online.

News Discussions

Scheufele (2002) found that there was a positive interaction between mass media use, including newspapers and television hard news with interpersonal discussions on politics. Through a survey administered to a randomly selected sample of residents in Austin, Texas, Kiouisis (2001) discovered a moderate negative linkage between interpersonal communication and credibility perception for television news but not for newspapers.

The WAN Young Readership Development Project (2007) revealed that young people listed ‘discussion with friends’ as the top source for news and information, ranked higher than TV and newspapers. In particular, social network in Internet such as facebook, MySpace, twitter, etc. appear to be the key sources spreading news for most young people.

The active participation of the interpersonal discussions about the news is important. Through discussion people develop and validate their own thoughts and opinions on issues. Scheufele (2002) argued that talking about certain issues with other citizens is a necessary condition for fully understand those issues. Interpersonal

discussions with peers or family, thus, help not only reinforce preexisting information, but also make people aware of the new information. More recently, however, Stamm, Emig, and Hesse (1997) suggested that the key role of interpersonal discussions is community integration.

However, the effects vary according to gender, age, and ethnicity. In Malaysia, such effects are yet to be explored, tested and confirmed by the present study. Based on the literature, a theoretical framework is developed for this study (Figure 1).

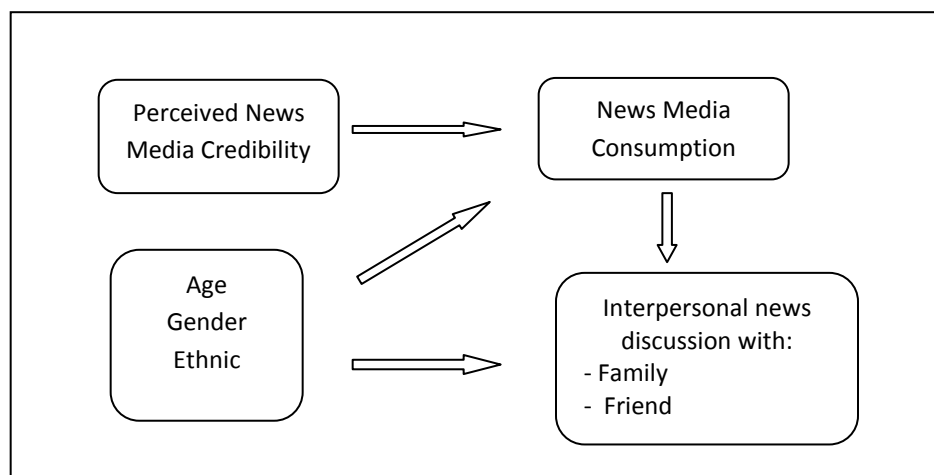


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using a survey method. All the data collected came from a self-administered questionnaire composed for the purpose of this study. The data were collected over a period of three months, from November 2007 through early January 2008. A total of 1363 respondents, representing youth from Malaysia, were gathered for this study.

The Respondents of the Study

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents according to gender, ethnicity, age group, educational level, marital status, and family income.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Demographic Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender (N=1363)	Male	669	49.1
	Female	694	50.9
	Total	1363	100.0
Ethnicity (N=1350)	Malay	762	56.4
	Chinese	457	33.9
	Indian	131	9.7
	Total	1350	100.0
Age Group (N=1363)	20 years old and less	803	58.9
	21 and more years old	560	41.1
	Total	1363	100.0
Educational Level (N=1357)	UPSR	48	3.5
	PMR	311	22.9
	SPM/SPMV	392	28.9
	STPM/Matriculation	376	27.7
	Diploma	111	8.2
	Degree	109	8.0
	Others	10	0.7
	Total	1357	100.0
Marital Status (N=1363)	Single	1314	96.4
	Married	42	3.1
	Divorced	7	0.5
	Total	1363	100.0
Family Income (N=1225)	Less than RM1000	514	42.0
	RM1001-RM3000	523	42.7
	RM3001-RM5000	106	8.7
	RM5001-RM7000	40	3.3
	RM7001 and above	42	3.4
	Total	1225	100.0

It is found that there is an equal proportion of male (49.1%) to female (50.9%) who responded to this study. In relations to ethnicity, more than half of the respondents (56.4%) are Malays, followed by Chinese (33.9%), and Indians (9.7%). More than half of the respondents are 20 years old and less (58.9%) while the rest (41.1%) are 21 years of age and more. Regarding educational level, 28.8% have SPM/SPMV, 27.6% with STPM/Matriculation, and 22.8% with PMR. Furthermore, almost all of the respondents

(96.4%) are single and majority of them have a family income of less than RM3000 (84.7%).

Measures

Perceived Media Credibility

Television, newspapers and Internet credibility were each measured using a 5-point Likert scale where 1=not believe at all, 2=not believe, 3=somewhat believe, 4=believe, and 5=believe totally.

News Media Consumption

A measure for news media consumption tapped the respondents' exposure and attention to news of national and public affairs in television, newspapers, and Internet. Respondents were asked to respond to items by estimating how frequently they watch national and public affairs news. For examples, in TV news programs, the codes for the scale are 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes, 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes, and 4=more than 60 minutes a day. For each medium exposure, respondents were also asked to indicate how much attention they paid to the news on a four-point scale. The codes for the scale are 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, and 4=much attention.

Likewise, the respondents were asked to self-report how much time they spent reading newspapers for national and public affairs news where code 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes; 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes a day, and 4=more than 1 hour; and how much attention they paid reading news with code 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, 4=much attention.

For the Internet, the respondents were asked to indicate the amount of time spent per week with 0=none, 1=less than 15 minutes, 2=16-30 minutes, 3=31-60 minutes, and 4=more than 1 hour and how much attention they paid to the news with code 1=no attention at all, 2=little attention, 3=some attention, 4=much attention. In addition, media

consumption is measured using the product of media exposure and media attention for each medium.

TV Consumption = TV Exposure (time) x TV Attention
Newspaper Consumption = Newspaper Reading (time) x Newspaper Attention
Internet Consumption = Internet Exposure (time) x Internet Attention

Interpersonal News Discussions

Two questions were asked in the relation to news discussion. The respondents were asked “how often do they discuss current national news with family” with code 0=none, 1=once in a month, 2=once in a week, 3=once in 2-3 days, 4=almost every day, and 5=everyday. Similar codes were used to tap frequency of discussing current national news with friends.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS WIN 16.0 for both descriptive and inferential statistics. For the descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used. For the inferential statistics, correlation analyses were used. T-test was used also to test differences according to gender and age group to news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. In addition, ONEWAY ANOVA was used to differentiate between various ethnicities in relation to news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The findings are presented based on the objectives of the study.

Level of Perceived News Media Credibility

Table 2 presents the level of perceived media credibility among youth. In terms of the news media, more than two-fifths of the respondents (44.2%) said that they believe in the news on TV while 36.5% of them cited somewhat believe the news on TV. Only 11.3% of the respondents confirmed that they totally believe the news on TV. The mean for TV news credibility is 3.56, indicating some degree of believability.

With regard to newspapers, more than two-fifths of the respondents (41.2%) believed that the newspaper is a credible source of news. The mean for newspapers credibility is 3.49, indicating that there is some degree of believability. On the other hand, only 23.4% of the respondents believe in the news on the Internet. While more than two-fifths of the respondents (42.9%) cited that they somewhat believe in the news on the Internet. The mean number of Internet credibility is 3.02, indicating somewhat believing in the internet.

Table 2: News Media Credibility

Perceived Media Credibility	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television (N=1363)	Not believe at all	31	2.3
	Not believe	79	5.8
	Somewhat believe	495	36.5
	Believe	600	44.2
	Believe totally	153	11.3
	Total	1358	100.0
	Mean= 3.56, SD=0.852		
Newspapers (N=1362)	Not believe at all	24	1.8
	Not believe	110	8.1
	Somewhat believe	529	39.0
	Believe	560	41.2
	Believe totally	135	9.9
	Total	1358	100.0
	Mean=3.49, SD=0.847		
Internet (N=1363)	Not believe at all	72	5.3
	Not believe	306	22.5
	Somewhat believe	582	42.9
	Believe	318	23.4
	Believe totally	80	5.9
	Total	1358	100.0
	Mean=3.02, SD=0.953		

Level of News Media Consumption

News media consumption is a product of media exposure and media attention for each of the media, that is, television, newspaper, and Internet. Therefore, Table 3a and Table 3b present media exposure and media attention, respectively.

a. News Media Exposure

Table 3a presents the level of news media exposure among youth. It is found that more than one-third of the respondents (34.0%) spent more than 16-30 minutes watching news on TV every day. Almost two-fifths of the respondents (37.8%) read newspapers for less than 15 minutes. Some of the respondents (22.0%) spent less than 15 minutes on Internet. However, it is also found that two-fifths of the respondents (40.8%) did not expose to news on Internet at all.

Table 3a: News Media Exposure

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television	None	181	13.3
	Less than 15 minutes per day	287	21.1
	16-30 minutes per day	464	34.0
	31-60 minutes per day	222	16.3
	More than 1 hour per day	209	15.3
	Total	1363	100.0
Newspapers	None	144	10.6
	Less than 15 minutes per day	515	37.8
	16-30 minutes per day	458	33.6
	31-60 minutes per day	143	10.5
	More than 1 hour per day	103	7.6
	Total	1363	100.0
Internet	None	553	40.8
	Less than 15 minutes per week	299	22.0
	16-30 minutes per week	211	15.5
	31-60 minutes per week	118	8.7
	More than 1 hour per week	176	13.0
	Total	1357	100.0

b. News Media Attention

Table 3b presents the distribution of the respondents in relation to attention given to the media on news. More than half of the respondents gave some attention to the news on TV (55.0%) and to the news on newspapers (50.2%). There are some respondents who give much attention to watching TV news program (16.9%). More than one-third of the respondents also gave some attention to the news on the Internet (34.5%). On other hand, almost one-third of the respondents (30.2%) did not pay any attention to the news on the Internet at all.

Table 3b: News Media Attention

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television	No attention at all	128	9.4
	Little attention	255	18.7
	Some attention	750	55.0
	Much attention	230	16.9
	Total	1363	100.0
Newspapers	No attention at all	131	9.6
	Little attention	354	26.0
	Some attention	684	50.2
	Much attention	194	14.2
	Total	1363	100.0
Internet	No attention at all	411	30.2
	Little attention	378	27.8
	Some attention	470	34.5
	Much attention	103	7.6
	Total	1362	100.0

c. News Media Consumption

News media consumption is measured using the product of the exposure to news and attention given to the news (Table 3c). The findings revealed that many of the respondents are high consumers of TV news, newspapers news, and Internet news. They consumed news highly on TV (59.1%), followed by newspapers (47.6%) and Internet (43.5%). However, almost one-third of the respondents (27.4%) did not consume news on the Internet.

Table 3c: News Media Consumption

Media	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Television (M=8.8797, SD=4.93350)	None	99	7.3
	Low	458	33.6
	High	806	59.1
	Total	1363	100.0
Newspapers (M=7.6596, SD=4.42925)	None	96	7.0
	Low	619	45.4
	High	648	47.6
	Total	1363	100.0
Internet (M=5.9550, SD=5.28077)	None	327	27.4
	Low	395	29.1
	High	589	43.5
	Total	1356	100.0

Extent of Interpersonal News Discussions

Table 4 demonstrates that most of the respondents did not engage in any interpersonal news discussions neither with their family (34.6%) nor with their friends (32.1%). However, some respondents (22.1%) have interpersonal news discussions with their family once in a month and only 1.8% of the discussed news with their family members on a daily basis. Regarding the interpersonal news discussions with friends, there are 21.5% of the respondents who had news discussion with their friends once in a week. The mean for interpersonal news discussions with family is 2.42 and the mean for discussion with family is 2.57. This implies that youth discuss more with friends than with family members ($t=-4.467$, $p=0.000$). Those who discuss more with friends tend to discuss more with their family members, too ($r=0.648$, $p=0.000$). This is because there is a strong positive relationship between news discussion family and news discussion with friends.

Table 4: Interpersonal news discussions

Interpersonal News Discussions	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Family	None	472	34.6
	Once in a month	301	22.1
	Once in a week	271	19.9
	Once in 2-3 days	202	14.8
	Almost everyday	93	6.8
	Everyday	24	1.8
	Total	1363	100.0
	Mean=2.42, SD=1.362		
Friend	None	437	32.1
	Once in a month	278	20.4
	Once in a week	293	21.5
	Once in 2-3 days	185	13.6
	Almost everyday	134	9.8
	Everyday	36	2.6
	Total	1363	100.0
	Mean=2.57, SD=1.438		

$t=-4.467$, $df=1362$, $p=0.000$; $r=0.648$, $p=0.000$

Relationship between News Media Consumption and Perceived Media Credibility with Interpersonal News Discussions

a. Relationship between News Media Consumption and Perceived Media Credibility

Table 5a presents the relationships between news media consumption and perceived media credibility. The results reveal that media consumption is related to media credibility. It is found that there is a positive weak relationship between TV news consumption with perceived TV credibility ($r=0.237$, $p=0.000$), newspapers consumption with perceived newspapers credibility ($r=0.120$, $p=0.000$) and Internet news consumption with perceived Internet credibility ($r=0.113$, $p=0.000$). This implies that the higher their perceived credibility of the media, the higher the news media consumption.

Table 5a: Correlation between news media consumption and perceived media credibility

Variable	N	r	p
TV consumption – TV credibility	1358	0.237	0.000
Newspapers consumption – Newspapers credibility	1358	0.120	0.000
Internet consumption – Internet credibility	1351	0.113	0.000

b. Relationship between News Media Consumption and Interpersonal News Discussions

Table 5b shows the relationships between news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions. It is indicated that family discussion is moderately related with TV news consumption ($r=0.308$, $p=0.000$), with newspapers consumption ($r=0.387$, $p=0.000$) and with Internet news consumption ($r=0.373$, $p=0.000$). Regarding the interpersonal news discussions with friend, it is found that there is a weak relationship between TV news consumption ($r=0.294$, $p=0.000$) and discussions with friends. News discussions with friends is moderately related with newspapers consumption ($r=0.438$, $p=0.000$) and with Internet news consumption ($r=0.434$, $p=0.000$). This shows that the higher the media consumption, the higher is the interpersonal news discussions.

Table 5b: Correlation between news media consumption and interpersonal news discussions

Interpersonal News Discussions	N	r	p
Family			
TV consumption	1363	0.308	0.000
Newspapers consumption	1363	0.387	0.000
Internet use	1356	0.373	0.000
Friends			
TV consumption	1363	0.294	0.000
Newspapers consumption	1363	0.438	0.000
Internet consumption	1356	0.434	0.000

Testing the Agenda Setting Theory

Data pertaining to interpersonal news discussions (family and friends) were further analyzed using simple multiple regression. Results (Table 5c) show that media consumption (TV, newspapers, and Internet) influences interpersonal news discussions with family and with friends. Family news discussion is not affected by media credibility (TV, newspapers, and Internet) at all. However, newspapers credibility is negatively related news discussion with friends ($t=-2.236$, $p=0.026$) but Internet credibility is positively related with news discussion with friends ($t=2.295$, $p=0.022$). This means that the Agenda Setting Theory is being confirmed whereby news media

consumption (TV, newspapers, and Internet) influences interpersonal news discussions between youth and their family members and with their friends.

Table 5c: Simple multiple regression showing interpersonal news discussion with media credibility and news consumption

Family	B	Beta	t	p
Constant	1.158		6.743	0.000
TV Credibility	-0.001	-0.001	-0.028	0.978
Newspapers Credibility	0.011	0.007	0.211	0.833
Internet Credibility	-0.010	-0.007	-0.272	0.785
TV news consumption	0.044	0.158	5.841	0.000
Newspaper Consumption	0.067	0.218	7.684	0.000
Internet Consumption	0.063	0.243	8.945	0.000
F=65.550;df=6,1344; p=0.000; R=0.476, R sq adj=0.223				
Friends	B	Beta	t	p
Constant	0.939		5.385	0.000
TV Credibility	0.100	0.059	1.929	0.054
Newspapers Credibility	-0.118	-0.070	-2.236	0.026
Internet Credibility	0.084	0.056	2.295	0.022
TV news consumption	0.036	0.123	4.697	0.000
Newspaper Consumption	0.085	0.262	9.605	0.000
Internet Consumption	0.079	0.289	11.057	0.000
F=88.669;df=6,1344; p=0.000; R=0.533, Adj R sq=0.280				

News Media Consumption by Gender, Age, and Race

The demographic characteristics that are explored in this study are gender (male and female), age (young and old), and race (Malay, Chinese, and Indian).

a. News Media Consumption by Gender

Table 6a presents the findings of news media consumption in terms of gender and age. Results revealed that male youth tended to watch more news on TV than female youth

($t=4.025$, $p=0.000$). In terms of news in the newspapers, there is no difference between male and female in their news consumption ($t=0.676$, $p=0.000$). The same pattern is also found in the Internet consumption. There is no difference between male and female in their Internet news consumption ($t=-1.378$, $p=0.168$).

a. **News Media Consumption by Age**

Regarding age, the results (Table 6a) revealed that the older youth (21 and above) tended to consume more news on all of the media compared to the young ones (20 years old and less). Specifically, the older youth watch news on TV more than the younger youth ($t=-3.755$, $p=0.000$). The older youth also prefer to read news on the newspapers more than the young ones ($t=-6.233$, $p=0.000$). In addition, the older youth tended to utilize the Internet to obtain news more than the young ones ($t=-6.791$, $p=0.000$).

This implies that older youth watch TV news, read newspapers and use Internet frequently and for a longer period of time than the younger ones.

Table 6a: T-test for news media consumption by age and gender

Media Consumption	Selected variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
TV consumption	Gender	Male	669	9.42	4.96	4.025	1361	0.000
		Female	694	8.35	4.85			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	803	8.46	4.715	-3.755	1129	0.000
		21 and above	560	9.49	5.174			
Newspapers consumption	Gender	Male	669	7.58	4.567	0.676	1361	0.499
		Female	694	7.74	4.293			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	803	7.04	4.238	-6.233	1361	0.000
		21 and above	560	8.54	4.550			
Internet consumption	Gender	Male	668	5.75	5.18	-1.378	1354	0.168
		Female	688	6.15	5.37			
	Age (years)	20 years old and less	797	5.13	4.67	-6.719	1025	0.000
		21 and above	559	7.13	5.85			

b. **News Media Consumption by Race**

Table 6b shows news media consumption in relation to race. Malays are the highest users of TV news compared to Chinese and Indians ($F=127.881$, $p=0.000$). Indian youth are the highest consumer of news in newspapers compared to the Malays and the

Chinese ($F=9.872$, $p=0.000$). However, there is no difference among races on the Internet news consumption. Malays, Indian, and Chinese are the same in term of their Internet news consumption.

This implies that Malays are the heavy viewers of TV news than both the Chinese and the Indians. The Indians, on the other hand, are heavy readers of newspaper compared to the Malays and the Chinese youth.

Table 6b: F-test for news media consumption by race

Media Consumption	N	Mean	SD	F	df	P	t-comparison
TV Consumption by Race:	1350	8.85	4.916	127.881	2,1347	0.000	M>C, I>C
Malay	762	10.37	4.559				
Chinese	457	6.13	4.092				
Indian	131	9.53	5.503				
Newspapers Consumption by Race:	1350	7.64	4.410	9.872	2,1347	0.000	I>C, M>C
Malay	762	7.97	4.453				
Chinese	457	6.90	4.011				
Indian	131	8.24	5.139				
Internet Consumption by Race:	1343	5.94	5.276	1.533	(2,1340)	0.216	Not significant
Malay	5.99	5.219	755				
Chinese	5.68	5.271	457				
Indian	6.57	5.592	131				

Interpersonal News Discussions by Gender, Age, and Race

Interpersonal news discussions are looked at from the perspective of the family and friends while the demographic characteristics are viewed from three variables, namely, gender (male and female), age (young and old), and race (Malay, Chinese, and Indian).

a. Interpersonal News Discussions by Gender

Table 7a presents the findings on the interpersonal news discussions by respondents in terms of age and race. Results revealed that there is no difference between male and female in terms of their interpersonal news discussions either with family or with friends.

b. Interpersonal News Discussions by Age

The older youth tended to discuss news more with family ($t=-3.225$, $p=0.001$) and with friends ($t=-5.331$, $p=0.000$) in comparison to the younger youth (20 years old and less). This implies that older youth tend to discuss news more with family members and friends compared to the younger ones.

Table 7a: T-test for interpersonal news discussions by age and gender

Interpersonal News Discussions	Selected variable	Category	N	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Family	Gender	Male	669	2.46	1.398	0.966	1350	0.334
		Female	694	2.39	1.326			
	Age	20 years old and less	803	2.33	1.328	-3.225	1361	0.001
		21 and above	560	2.57	1.399			
Friends	Gender	Male	669	2.60	1.434	0.870	1361	0.385
		Female	694	2.53	1.441			
	Age	20 years old and less	803	2.39	1.396	-5.331	1361	0.000
		21 and above	560	2.81	1.462			

c. Interpersonal News Discussions by Race

Table 7b presents the findings on the interpersonal news discussions by race. Results show that Chinese youth have less news discussion with family members ($F=21.934$, $p=0.000$) and with friends ($F=21.914$, $p=0.000$) compared to the Indian and the Malay youth. It implies that Indian and Malay youth tend to discuss news with family members and friends more than the Chinese youth.

Table 7b: F-test for interpersonal news discussions by race

Interpersonal News Discussions	N	Mean	SD	F	df	p	t-comparison
Family Discussion by Race:	1350	2.42	1.359	21.934	2,1347	0.000	I>C, M>C
Malay	762	2.58	1.395				
Chinese	457	2.08	1.222				
Indian	131	2.65	1.386				
Friend Discussions by Race:	1350	2.56	1.439	21.914	2,1347	0.000	I>C, M>C
Malay	762	2.69	1.465				
Chinese	457	2.23	1.277				
Indian	131	2.98	1.588				

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made.

TV is perceived as the most credible mass media, followed by the newspapers, and then the Internet. This is because of the current news on national and public affairs that are disseminated by both media are reliable. Internet credibility is still low as perceived by the Malaysian youth.

There are still youth who do watch TV, read newspapers, and surf the Internet. Those who are exposed to the media spent about half of an hour on each medium. They also give some attention to the media concerned. Therefore, their consumption varies whereby it is considered high for TV, moderate for newspapers, and low for the Internet.

A substantial proportion of the youth do not discuss current national news from the media with their family members and with their friends. Those who do so would discuss current national news twice a week with both family members and with their friends.

There is a small yet positive relationship between perceived TV media credibility and TV news consumption. TV consumption, in turn, is weakly positively related to family news discussion and to friend news discussion. Likewise a positive relationship exists between newspapers credibility and newspapers consumption. Newspapers consumption, in turn, is weakly related to family news discussion but moderately related to friend news discussion. Perceived Internet credibility is also slightly related with Internet consumption. In turn, Internet consumption is moderately related with family news discussion.

News media consumption and interpersonal news discussions were further looked at in terms of gender, age, and race. Male youth tend to be more exposed and focused on TV news than the female youth. TV, newspapers, and Internet are mainly used by the older youth (more than 21 years old) than the younger youth. In terms of race, Malays are the heavy users of TV than the Indian youth and the Chinese youth.

Newspapers are also widely used by the Indian and the Malay youth than the Chinese youth for current national news. The current national news was discussed

widely by the older youth with their family members and their friends than the younger youth. Again, the Indian youth superseded the Malay youth and the Chinese youth in terms current national news discussions with family members and with friends.

Therefore, the Agenda Setting Theory holds true among Malaysian youth when the media consumption for TV, newspapers, and the Internet is strongly influencing interpersonal news discussions among youth with their family and with their friends. It is especially true among older male youth who are Indians and Malays because they discuss current national news widely with their family members and with their friends after using the appropriate media.

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